



Education Watch

Enhancing Flexibility & Accountability ■ Leaving No Child Behind

U.S. House Education & the Workforce Committee ■ John Boehner, Chairman
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October 15, 2001

Leaders Reaffirm Commitment to Education Reform this Year

The leaders of the House-Senate conference on education reform met with President George W. Bush on Friday and reiterated their pledge to complete the education reform bill this year.

In a Saturday, Oct. 14, *Washington Post* story (Michael Fletcher, "Bush Lobbies for Education Bill's Passage," Oct. 14), Rep. John Boehner, the chairman of the House-Senate education conference, said "The president reiterated his desire that we complete this bill this year and we reaffirmed our commitment to getting it done. He said it is important to do this to show the country is still dealing with issues that matter in everyday life."

"Tough issues remain which the conference committee still has to work out," Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) said. "But I'm optimistic that we'll reach a solid compromise that will have broad bipartisan support."

Sen. Judd Gregg (R-NH) told the *Post* that, "Everybody is trying to move this conference forward. The president wants a bill. Everybody in the room wants a bill. There is a desire to bring this to closure."

The House last week approved a bipartisan education funding bill that reflects a compromise between Republicans and Democrats on education funding increases for the upcoming fiscal year. The measure closely follows H.R. 1, the *No Child Left Behind* Act, and includes a increase in education funding contingent on enactment of the President's reforms.

On Wednesday, the conference committee will meet to ratify another round of bipartisan education agreements.

Message of the Day

House and Senate education leaders agree that Congress will complete President Bush's reform plan this year.

- ❑ *The President's plan targets funding increases to students who need it the most, expands local decision-making flexibility, and streamlines bureaucracy.*
- ❑ *The Bush proposal focuses on effective, proven methods of reading instruction based on scientific research.*
- ❑ *Real accountability is essential if we are going to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their more affluent peers.*
- ❑ *We have a moral obligation to address 35 years of failed federal education policy. The status quo must end.*

DAILY EDUCATION FACTS

- The House-passed bill (H.R. 1) gives states and local schools additional flexibility to improve student performance by reducing red tape and consolidating duplicative federal programs.
- In order to focus funding on what works, H.R. 1 reduces the overall number of ESEA programs from 55 to 47; the Senate increases the overall number from 55 to 89 (*source: Congressional Research Service*).
- The Senate-passed bill gives state governments important relief from federal red tape, allowing 25 school districts and seven state governments to apply for greater flexibility in exchange for stronger accountability.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"We aren't just focused on getting the bill done; we're focused on getting it done right. This legislation will make a very real difference to schools, communities, and students, and we have an obligation to do it carefully and correctly." -- Rep. John Boehner (R-OH), chairman of the House-Senate education conference, *The Washington Post*, October 14, 2001